

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 11-17, 19-20, 22, 24, 28-31 and 33-34 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 8, 11, 17, 19, 20, 28, 33 and 34 are amended and claims 9-10, 18, 21, 25-27 and 32 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Various amendments are made to the claims for clarity, and are unrelated to issues of patentability.

The Office Action objects to claims 20, 28-31 and 34 because of informalities. It is respectfully submitted that the above amendments obviate the grounds for objection. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Office Action's indication that claims 1-7 and 28 are allowed and that claims 10-16, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 33 contain allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, independent claim 8 is amended to include features of dependent claim 9 and allowable dependent claim 10, allowable dependent claim 11 is rewritten in independent form and independent claim 17 is amended to include allowable features of dependent claim 18. Further, independent claim 20 is amended to include allowable features of dependent claim 21 and allowable dependent claim 33 is rewritten in independent form. Thus, each of independent claims 1, 8, 11, 17, 20 and 33 defines patentable subject matter.

Each of the dependent claims depends from one of the independent claims and therefore defines patentable subject matter at least for this reason. In addition, the dependent claims recite features that further and independently distinguish over the applied references.

Serial No. **09/745,873**

Docket No. **P-0136**

Reply to Office Action dated August 23, 2006

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-8, 11-17, 19-20, 22, 24, 28-31 and 33-34 are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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